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BRUNHILDE.

WAGNER OPERA STORIES.

By
GRACE EDSON BARBER.

Bloomington, Illinois.
PUBLIC-SCHOOL PUBLISHING CO.
1913.

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To My Father and Mother.

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INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

Stories hold the same relative position in the development of children that literature does in the life of the adult. They give to the child a broader glimpse of life than his own little world can afford him. They bring to him richer and more varied experiences than it is possible for him to pass through personally. In the right kind of stories are made possible all those splendid "might be's" which like giants battle down the prison walls of fear and give to the soul the courage to bring to light its fair ideals and beautiful dreams and thus change life from dull prose to glorious poetry. One does not need a lengthy conversation with a man or woman to discover whether his or her childhood has been passed in the common-

place details of every day life, or to feel that he or she, in childhood, became familiar with prophets and psalmists, with kings and queens, with genii and giant. In the latter case there is a lightness of touch, a quickness of intellect and intuitive perception of the courtesy due the occasion and which is recognized although it remains an indescribable something. In the one case the imagination has been rightly cultivated and in the other case it has been neglected. And yet there is scarcely any part of education that is as misunderstood as the wise selection of stories for children.

There still lingers in the minds of some good people a prejudice against the retelling to children of the great myths of the race, simplified of course as to complexity of detail and motive. As well might we refuse to let them listen to the

best music, or to look at the world's best pictures. There is even a closer relationship between the childish mind and the mythical story than there is between it and sublime music or great pictures. In the myth the child-race embodied its deepest spiritual experiences in simple child-like forms. It had no other way of leaving a record of its "far-off calling after God." It was a necessary stage of race-development and is an equally necessary stage of child-development. Myths and the right kinds of fairy-tales are truth put into embodied form, without comment or moral appendix. How much of our comprehension of the teachings of Jesus Christ would have been lacking if we had not the parables of the sower, the house on the sand, the prodigal son, and all the rest of those beautiful mythical stories with which He taught the multitude?

I know of no finer illustration of how to handle the great myth-treasures of the race than that shown by Miss Barber in the following simple retelling of some of the old legends, told and retold by generations of mothers to their listening children, and which finally culminated by setting the soul of Richard Wagner on fire. They have interpreted the meaning of music to the childish heart as I have seldom seen it interpreted. What was too complex is left out. What was sweet and true and strong has been retained, and all has been rewoven with a daintiness of touch that belongs to the true artist which in this case is but another name for the true story teller.

ELIZABETH HARRISON,
Chicago, Illinois.

THE RHINE-GOLD.

THE RHINE-GOLD.

All is quiet, beautiful, and peaceful in our world now, but it has not always been so.

Thousands of years ago it was very different. Great earthquakes shook the foundations of the earth. Sharp lightning kept the sky on fire and deep thunder rolled. Great giants lived on mountains so high that their peaks were partly hidden by the clouds. Black and ugly dwarfs lived under the earth and worked with all kinds of metals, while on the earth's surface lived the common race of men.

Great were the struggles of these early days and many were the lessons learned. So wonderful was the story of those far-

away ages that it has been told again and again. Men whose souls seem to have been on fire have written books telling this story. Others have shown it in pictures great and beautiful, but the most wonderful way it has ever been told is by the greatest musician of the world. In grand and sublime music he has told of the mighty conflicts, the battles lost, the victories won, and the peace which came at last. So wonderful is this story as he told it that the greatest singers of the world sing it over and over again so that all people may learn its great lesson and be filled with a love stronger than the giants themselves.

Perhaps as you read this story, or when you are men and women and you hear it sung, your hearts, too, will respond again to the struggles of those mighty heroes of long ago.

THE RHINE-GOLD.

Far away over the ocean in Germany, there is a very beautiful river which is called the Rhine. People go hundreds and thousands of miles to ride upon its waters. From its banks rise many hills. Some of them are very high, while others are lower and less steep. On these hills are quaint old castles which for centuries were the homes of brave, true knights. But the story is not about the Rhine as it is now, but as it was thousands of years ago.

At that time ever so many strange, unearthly creatures lived in the beautiful Rhine river. They had long, golden hair and very happy faces, for they had never known sorrow. The queer thing about these maidens was that they could never be seen out of the river. They ate, slept and played in its depths. Their father,

who had left them many years ago, had called them the Rhine Daughters, after their river home.

In this river were many rocks. Some were very high and others so low that they could scarcely be seen. These were playmates for the Rhine Daughters. They could jump from one rock to another as lightly as a squirrel can spring from tree to tree.

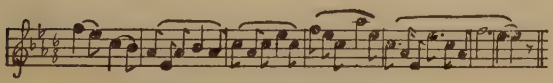
On the highest rock of all was what all this story is about,—a lump of pure, solid gold, more bright than anything imaginable. This gold had belonged to the river Rhine as long as anyone then living could remember, and it, too, was named after the river. So its name was the Rhine-Gold.

When the father of the maidens left them he told them that whatever else they did, they must be sure to watch and

guard this Rhine-Gold. Never for one instant were they to leave it alone lest some one might come and steal it away.

One morning they were unusually happy as they danced from one rock to another, and no wonder; for the Rhine-Gold looked more beautiful than ever as the sun came up and shone upon it. It looked then as if hundreds of sunbeams were hidden within it.

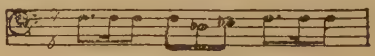
The Rhine Daughters noticed how beautiful it was, and taking hold of hands they danced around it. As they danced they began to sing in fresh, glad tones, a beautiful song, and this is their song:



RHINE DAUGHTERS MOTIVE.

Scarcely had the last notes died away when they heard a voice. They turned

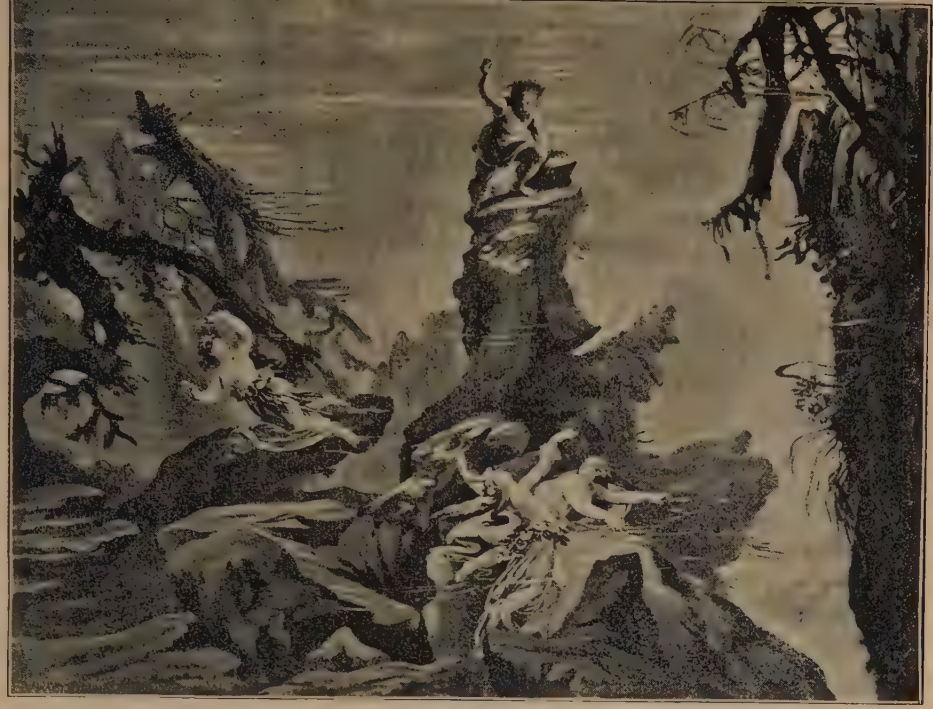
quickly to see whence it came, but no one was there. Presently they heard the voice again, and looking down they saw many little ripples on the surface of the river. The voice seemed to be coming nearer and nearer. They listened and this is what they heard:



NIBELUNG MOTIVE.

In a moment, up out of the river came the ugliest little dwarf you can imagine. He was very small, and instead of standing up straight as a knight or brave man would stand, he was bent away over. His face was dark and hideous, and his coal black hair as matted as if it had never been combed.

He was so different from any one the Rhine Daughters had ever seen that at first they were frightened.



ALBERICH STEALING THE GOLD.

"Good morning to you," said the dwarf.

"Good morning, sir," said the Rhine Daughters. "Who are you and where did you come from?"

"I am Alberich, King of the Nibelungs, and I came from my home under the earth."

"You do not live under the earth where there is no sunshine, do you?" asked one of the maidens.

"Sunshine!" said Alberich, squinting his eyes, "I do not like sunshine. It hurts my eyes."

"Are the Nibelungs all black and ugly like you?" asked another Rhine Daughter.

"Yes, they are all dark, but if you will come back with me I will make you my queen and then you will not think us ugly."

"What! leave the sunshine and our Rhine-Gold? Never! Not even to be a queen would I do that!"

"Gold," said Alberich, "where is it?"

"Come up here and you will see it," called the Rhine Daughters.

Alberich tried to climb up, but the rocks were so slippery that it took him a long time, for at every other step he slipped back. Finally he got high enough to see the gold, and it almost blinded him, for the sun was shining directly upon it, and then, too, you know, his eyes were not used to the sunlight.

"Tell me about this gold," said Alberich.

"Oh yes! We never tire of telling the story of Rhine-Gold—that is, as much as we know of it.

"Many, many years ago, when our father left us, he told us to watch and guard the gold; then he told us the secret of its power: Whoever can gain possession of the gold can make it into a magic

ring, and that ring will make him master of all earthly powers except love."

"Love! What do I care for love if I can have magic power?" cried the dwarf.

"Oh, but love is all that makes the world beautiful. 'Tis love that sends the sunshine and the flowers," said one of the Rhine Daughters.

"Love is nothing to me," said Alberich, and before they knew it he had stolen the gold and was fast disappearing beneath the river.

"Oh! Our Rhine-Gold! Our Rhine-Gold is gone!" cried the maidens. They called loudly to Alberich, but it was too late; for already he had vanished, and they could see nothing but the ripples on the surface of the river. They sprang into the water, but only to see him sink down, down, down to his deep, dark home, and they could hear him say, "Now the earth is mine!"

"Ah," said the sorrowful Rhine Daughters, as they came up to their rocks again, "he thinks he has the whole world, but it will be nothing to him if he has not love. Our gold! Our beautiful gold! Why did Alberich steal it!" And they sadly mourned.

After that the Rhine Daughters rarely played on the rocks, but whenever they were seen there they could be heard singing of their Rhine-Gold. But how changed was their song! Instead of being full of joy, it was sorrowful and sad, for the beautiful lump of gold which had always been theirs had been stolen.

High up on top of a mountain lived some very wise giants. The wisest one was the king, and his name was Wotan.

For a long time Wotan had wanted a palace large enough for all the giants to live in, but he could find no one stalwart

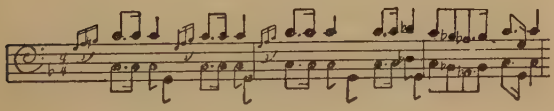
and strong enough to build it, so they had to live out of doors on the mountain.

One morning they were all awakened very early by a queer, rumbling sound.

"What is that noise?" said Wotan's sister.

"I do not know. It sounds like an earthquake," answered he.

"Listen! It seems to come nearer! It looks as if a great mountain were moving toward us."



GIANT MOTIVE.

Nearer and nearer came the sound, and nearer came what they thought was a mountain.

"It is a man!" cried Wotan, "but he is ten times larger than any of us. I must go to meet him."

"Ho there!" cried Wotan, "what do you want?"

"I have come to build you a palace," thundered the big giant.

"First tell me who you are," said Wotan.

"I am Fafner, the frost giant, and I am so strong I could lift this mountain if I chose."

"How long will it take you, and how much will you charge for building me a palace? It must be so large that it will cover the whole top of yonder mountain."

"I will build the palace tonight so that you can move in tomorrow at sunrise, but for pay you must give me your beautiful sister."

Wotan's thoughts were only of the palace, so without thinking, he promised to

give his sister to Fafner as soon as the palace was finished.

All that day Wotan and his comrades feasted and danced and had a very happy time for they were all thinking of the beautiful palace which was to be theirs in the morning.

At night all but Fafner lay down on the mountain-side to sleep. The full moon shone as bright as day and gave light to Fafner for his work.

With one step he crossed over to the mountain where the palace was to be, and quickly went to work. Such stones as he brought! Some were as large as an ordinary house, some smaller, and some even larger. At midnight the outside of the palace was completed, and Fafner went inside to finish putting in the windows and doors.

After a while the moon and stars began

to grow dim, and the great giant came outside to look at his work.

"All finished," he said, "and before sunrise, too. I will step back to the other mountain and wait for the giants to awaken."

Very soon it began to grow light. The sun came up and shone on the beautiful white marble palace. Fafner sat down and waited, but it was not long before he heard Wotan's wife calling him to awake and see the beautiful palace. Wotan and the other giants arose quickly and looked across to the mountain on which stood their new home.

"How beautiful! How beautiful!" they cried.

"Now you must give me your sister," said Fafner, "for I must go back at once to the frost country."

"You must think of some other way for

me to pay you, for I cannot let my sister go. Every morning she feeds us with golden apples and that keeps us always young."

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"Very well," said Fafner, and the whole mountain shook as he spoke, for he was more than angry. "I will tear the palace down quicker than I built it."

"No, no, do not do that," cried Wotan. "Give me just one hour in which to talk to my brother about it."

"One hour only," said Fafner.

Wotan soon found his brother, and told him they had but one hour in which to save their sister. Then he told him how he had promised to give his sister in payment for the palace.

"That was a very foolish thing to do," said his brother, "but perhaps we can think of something else which will answer."

"This morning when I was walking down beside the Rhine I saw Black Alberich steal the Rhine-Gold, and I also heard the Rhine Daughters tell him that a ring could be made of it, and the ring would give him a magic secret, so he could possess all earthly power save love."

"Perhaps Fafner would take the gold instead of our sister," continued the brother, "Let us go and ask him."

They hurried back to Fafner and asked him if he would take the gold instead of their sister.

"Yes, I will, but until you have the gold I will keep your sister. When you bring the gold here, I will bring your sister back to you."

Then lifting the beautiful maiden in his arms, Fafner hurried away, and instantly the giants began to grow old. Clouds came across the sky. The sun was hidden.

"Quick, brother, let us go at once!" cried Wotan.

They started immediately and went down, down, down. As they neared Alberich's kingdom such a noise as greeted their ears! It was just like ever so many hundreds of people pounding on anvils.

NIBELUNG MOTIVE.

"Here we are," said Wotan. "I wonder where Alberich is! When he comes what shall I say to him?"

"Leave that to me," said his brother. Wotan's brother was the most cunning and sly one of all the family of giants.

Running back and forth in every direction were queer little people, all black and bent like Alberich, and each one carrying gold, silver or precious stones.

"Mime, bring me that magic helmet at once, or I will give you a good beating," called Alberich to his brother.

"I cannot make it," whined Mime.

"You have it in your hand. I am king here, and I want you to understand that what you make belongs to me, and not to you!" cried Alberich.

"Take it then," said Mime, throwing it at him.

At that moment Alberich noticed Wotan and his brother.

"What are you here for, and what do you want," he asked.

"Oh, we just came to see you," said Wotan's brother. "What use is that magic helmet?"

"With that I can change myself into anything I wish," answered Alberich.

"Change into a dragon," said Wotan.

WOTAN GAINS POSSESSION OF THE MAGIC RING.

Alberich slipped the helmet over his head and instantly he disappeared, and a huge dragon lay squirming before them, and then, just as quickly the dragon vanished and Alberich appeared.

"That is all very easy," said Wotan's brother, "but I don't believe you can change into anything as small as a toad, can you?"

This made Alberich angry and he put on the helmet and in a moment a toad hopped at their feet.

"Step on him quick, Wotan," said his brother.

Wotan put his great foot upon the little toad, but instantly the toad was gone and there was Alberich struggling to get from under the giant's foot.

"Let me go! you are crushing me!" screamed Alberich.

"Not until you give me every bit of your

gold, the helmet and the ring," said Wotan.

"You may have all but the ring. That I will keep," said Alberich.

"Then I will crush you," said the King of the Giants.

"Take it all, then, and let me go," cried the dwarf.

Wotan lifted his foot and Alberich got up and commanded the gold to be brought. Without delay Wotan and his brother gathered it up and put it into large sacks. Then, turning to Alberich, Wotan demanded the helmet which he unwillingly gave.

"Now the magic ring."

Alberich's face grew blacker and blacker as he handed the ring to Wotan.

"Listen well to what I say," he shouted. "Cursed is that ring. It will bring only sorrow and unhappiness to anyone who may possess it."

But Wotan and his brother paid no attention to the curse. They picked up the gold and hurried back to the mountain. As they neared it they heard again the rumbling sound, and looking to the east they saw the Frost Giant, with the sister in his arms, coming over the mountain.

"Here is the gold! Now give us our sister that we may be young again," said Wotan.

"Make a pile of it as high as your sister is tall," said Fafner, "but if there is one little hole in it through which I can see the light, I will not give her back."

Wotan and the rest of the wise giants soon had the gold piled up, but they were careful not to put either the helmet or the magic ring upon it.

"I see a crack! Put on that helmet!" shouted Fafner.

Seeing that it was no use to refuse, Wotan threw the helmet on the pile.

Fafner walked around the great heap of gold and looked closely at it.

"Here is just one more little crack. You must put the ring here or I will take your sister away again."

"No, I must keep the ring," said Wotan.

"Very well. I was afraid you would not give me enough gold," and taking the sister up in his arms, Fafner started off.

"Give him the ring! Give him the ring!" cried all the giants, "or we shall soon grow so old that we cannot walk nor even see."

"Stop, Fafner," called Wotan. "Leave our beautiful sister. Here is the ring, but I warn you that a curse goes with it."

"What do I care for a curse! I do not need love and happiness if I have gold,"

and Fafner gathered up the shining heap, the helmet and the ring. With one step he disappeared. But he had left the beautiful maiden, and in less than no time a change came over all the giants. They were young once more!

But although Wotan had regained his youth, he had such a queer, heavy feeling in his heart. Again and again he thought he heard a voice say "Cursed is the Ring! It will bring only sorrow and unhappiness to whoever possesses it!"

"I shall never, never be really and truly happy again because I did not give the ring back to the Rhine Daughters. It has taken happiness away from me. Whom next will it curse? Oh, if I had but given it back I could have brought happiness instead of unhappiness to many."

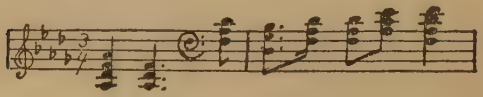
As he sat thinking, many black clouds appeared in the sky. Fierce lightning

flashed. The thunder shook the whole earth. The rain poured down.

It was a wild and terrible storm, but it lasted only a few moments. Again the sun shone out. Wotan called all the giants about him, and looking up they saw a rainbow bridge stretching from the mountain on which they were, away over to the one where the splendid palace stood in all its beauty.

"Let us go over to our Walhalla," said Wotan, "for that shall be the name of our new home."

One by one they stepped upon the bridge, and walked slowly over, and all the time the Walhalla music could be heard.



WALHALLA MOTIVE.

Wotan was the last one to step upon

WALHALLA AND THE RAINBOW BRIDGE.

the bridge. Very slowly he walked. Suddenly he stopped.

"What do I hear?" said he to himself. "Oh, it is the Rhine Daughters singing of their lost gold, and I might have given it back to them if I had only been brave enough. It will take some one who is braver and more of a hero than I to give it back," he added as he walked slowly on. "How different everything might have been if I had given it back. Then I would not feel this sadness. And now, to think that everyone who has the ring must be unhappy because *I* did not give it back and break the curse!

"How beautiful Walhalla is," said Wotan as he stepped into the palace, "but how dearly have I paid for it!"

DIE WALKÜRE.

DIE WALKÜRE,

OR THE STORY OF BRUNHILDE.

Wotan and the other giants lived for a time very happily in the splendid Walhalla.

The palace was very beautiful. The windows were so large that they seemed to let almost all the sunshine in the sky into the halls. The floors were of polished silver, and the walls were of solid gold, set with rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds.

The grounds which surrounded Walhalla were even more beautiful than the palace itself. There were trees so tall that it seemed as if the branches must almost touch the sky; and their trunks were so large that it took Wotan and six other

giants, all taking hold of hands, to reach around one of them.

Besides these wonderful shade trees, which had been growing for hundreds of years, there were great trees which bore delicious fruit all the year round.

Then, too, there were large, cool lakes, and the queerest boats, in which the giants would often ride.

With these beautiful surroundings the giants were very happy. All except Wotan. Every night they would sit out under the trees and listen to sweet music and feast upon the golden apples given them by the sister. These golden apples, you know, kept them always young.

Very often the giants would ask their king why he was so sad.

"Alas, I am afraid I have paid too dearly for Walhalla," was the mournful reply.

"Do not think so much about that but enjoy its beauties," said his brother.

But Wotan would not be comforted, for it seemed to him as if a voice was always whispering to him: "Cursed is the gold! Only sorrow will follow him who possesses it."

"Unhappiness and sorrow are sure to come to our home," thought he, "so I must prepare for it. I must find a means of defense or some day Walhalla and all its beauties will be destroyed. I will take my magic spear and go to find protection, even though I have to travel around the whole world."

Therefore, one dark night, taking with him his magic spear, Wotan left Walhalla.

This spear was very wonderful, for with it Wotan ruled the whole world. It was a magician's spear, and with it in his hands

he had but to command and the whole earth obeyed. Should this spear be broken Wotan could no longer rule the world. Many swords had battled with it, but only to be shattered and broken, while the spear had not even a scratch upon it.

There was great excitement among the giants the next morning when they found their king had left them. All that day they searched for him, but in vain. He was nowhere to be found. Night came, and still there was no trace of him.

"Look and see if he has taken the magic spear," said one of the giants.

They looked, and it was gone!

"We need not expect him home for weeks, even months, and perhaps years," said his wife, "for when Wotan goes away and takes his spear, it means that he has started on a long journey."

And sure enough! The days grew into

weeks, and the weeks into months. Still Wotan did not return. The months grew slowly into years, and years passed by. Still the king came not to Walhalla!

Many of the giants began to think he would never return. But the years to them did not mean what a year means to us. They could live for hundreds of years, and so long as they had the golden apples to feast upon, they never grew old. Still, the time seemed very long to them while their king stayed away.

"Walhalla seems very gloomy now," said one of the giants as he lay down to sleep one night. "I wonder what Wotan will bring with him when he returns. He never wanders upon the earth for so long a time, leaving us lonely here upon the mountain, without bringing back something which adds much to our comfort," said another giant.

In a short time all was quiet and peaceful in the palace. The moon kept watch while the giants slept. But about midnight they were awakened by some marvelous singing.

The giants started up.

"That must be Wotan!" they said. "Listen, it seems to come nearer."

"No, no, that is not his song!"

"Who can it be!"

"Hark! Hark! how different it sounds from our music!"

All the giants sprang to their feet and stood breathless, listening. And this is what they heard:

RIDE OF THE WAR MAIDENS.

Nearer and nearer came the music, and clearer and clearer rang out the song. Soon the giants could see their king.

But he is not alone! He has people with him! And they have horses, and look! look! the horses have wings and are flying!

See, there are nine horses, and on each horse is seated a beautiful maiden!

By this time Wotan and nine maidens dashed up to the palace steps, and sprang from their horses.

Each maiden was dressed in silver armour which glistened and sparkled in the moonlight; each held a large glittering shield, while on their heads were bright shining helmets, on each of which were two golden wings.

"Why did you bring all these maidens to Walhalla?" demanded Wotan's wife.

"These are the great War-Maidens. Mounted on their winged horses they are to go to the places where wars are wag-

ing. They will ride into the thick of the battles, and bring the bravest of all the heroes here. Then we shall be protected, and our palace free from harm."

As Wotan said this the War-Maidens sprang on their horses and rode round and round Walhalla, singing their song all the while:

The horses' feet never touched the ground, but with their powerful wings they flew more swiftly than eagles.

Each one of these War-Maidens had a name, but this story is about one of them only, and her name was Brunhilde. They were all very dear to Wotan, but he felt a more tender love for Brunhilde than for any of the others. She was the most beautiful because she was braver and stronger than any of her sisters.

Not a day passed but some of the maidens rode into a battle and brought back a brave hero, and quite often all went, so that before long Walhalla was filled with the bravest heroes of the earth. Brunhilde and her sisters were always allowed to choose for themselves the hero whom they would bring, and they had never made a mistake. No one had ever been brought, over whom Wotan did not rejoice.

Now there were so many brave warriors about the king that he had less fear of Alberich's curse. Still he never quite forgot it.

Wotan had many friends upon the earth and he often sent Brunhilde to bring one to Walhalla. Fricka, his wife, also had friends upon the earth, but her friends were not always among the most truthful men. One friend in particular was very

dear to her, and she often begged her husband to have him brought to the palace, but Wotan always had some reason for not sending for him.

By and by a great quarrel arose between Fricka's friend and a brave friend of Wotan. This gave the king much unhappiness. Fricka came to him and again demanded to have her friend brought.

"Do you not know, Wotan," she said, "that your friend has not been true to all the laws, and could you, knowing that, have him brought to Walhalla?"

Wotan, after a hard struggle with himself told her that in that respect she was right, and he would give the victory to her friend.

King Wotan was now very unhappy. Nevertheless he called Brunhilde to him and told her all about this terrible quarrel,—a quarrel which had resulted in a

battle so fierce that thousands had taken sides in it and were now fighting.

'Now, my brave War-Maiden, mount your horse! Fly at once to the battle and bring to our palace my wife's friend."

"But, Wotan, what troubles you? I never saw you look so sad when sending me for a hero," said Brunhilde.

"I never loved another as I love my friend and it makes me sad indeed to feel that I cannot have him brought here to live in our beautiful Walhalla."

"Let me bring your friend, father, since you love him so dearly," said Brunhilde.

"No, he has sinned, and I have made the promise to my wife. Go at once, and before sunset bring my wife's friend."

Brunhilde mounted her winged horse and was out of sight in a moment. They flew through the air, over mountain after moun-

tain. Soon she heard the clashing of swords.

"Stop, my horse! Down here is the battle," said she.

Then the horse flew straight to the earth.

Brunhilde had never before seen such a terrible battle. It seemed to her as if Wotan's friend was by far the bravest and truest hero that she had ever seen. For one instant she hesitated and then with a cry sprang forward to give the victory to him. Suddenly a cloud as red as fire appeared, with Wotan and his spear in the middle of it.

Wotan sprang in front of Brunhilde and stretched out his terrible spear. His friend at that moment had raised his sword to strike the enemy. Crash went the sword, broken in two pieces, for it had hit Wotan's mighty spear.

So the battle was over and the victory lost.

Wotan was so furious that the whole earth shook with his angry words. Brunhilde was terrified, but she could not resist picking up the broken sword. As she did so a mysterious voice whispered to her, "Nothung is the name of the sword. It is to be given to the hero who knows no fear."

"Brunhilde," shouted Wotan, "go at once to Walhalla and await me there."

She mounted her horse and was soon back at the palace. Her sisters were waiting for her.

"Quick! sisters! take this broken sword and give it to the hero who knows no fear."

Again the sky was ablaze as with a great fire. Then Wotan appeared, bringing Fricka's friend to Walhalla.

"Come hither, Brunhilde!" thundered

Wotan. "With your horse and your shield follow me to the side of the mountain."

Much frightened, she obeyed.

"Leave your horse, lay down your shield and stand before me."

"Father, father, what have I done?"

"You have dared to disobey the king of all giants, Wotan the Mighty, who rules the earth, and you must be punished for it."

"But Wotan, I tried to save the one you love," cried Brunhilde, kneeling at his feet.

"Oh! my friend, my friend," mourned Wotan, and he bowed his head in his hands.

Thus he sat a long time, and neither he nor Brunhilde moved or spoke. After a time he raised his head. The anger was all gone from his face and his voice was gentle as he said sadly to the maiden:

"Brunhilde, my best beloved, most beautiful War-Maiden, I must punish you. Look up into my face while I tell you what your

punishment must be. You have disobeyed me so I must send you from Walhalla. You can be a War-Maiden no longer. Yesterday you brought your last brave hero to our palace. Now you will have to live like any other woman upon the earth."

"Oh father, father, anything but that! Do not make me leave Walhalla!"

"Yes, my Brunhilde, it must be so. I shall put you to sleep and the first one who kisses you will awaken you, and you will come to Walhalla no more."

"One thing I ask, my father! Will you not place me in some spot where none but a hero can reach me? Surely you will not deny me this," pleaded Brunhilde.

"No, my War-Maiden," answered he sadly. "I will not deny your request. I will place you where only the hero who knows no fear can awaken you."

And as he spoke Wotan lifted Brunhilde in his strong arms, picked up the shield, and telling her horse to follow, he carried her, his beautiful War-Maiden, to a large smooth rock and laid her upon it.

"Here, Brunhilde, on the top of this lofty mountain, you are to await the hero who knows no fear. Sit up and look for the last time at Walhalla. Think of what it has cost me. All my happiness! Promise me, my daughter, after the hero awakens you, you will ever be brave and true. If you are, your life will be filled with a happiness which far exceeds anything I have ever known, living in yonder marble halls."

"Yes, my father, I promise. I will be brave and true," and Brunhilde for the last time gazed upon the towers and turrets of the beautiful white marble palace.

"Wotan, may my brave horse stay with me?" said she, as she lay down.

"Yes, your horse, the trees, the grass, and the flowers which surround you shall sleep. It will be very hard for anyone to reach you, my daughter, for I shall call on the fire to come and encircle this spot. Goodbye, my brave War-Maiden," and as he said this he stooped and kissed her. Instantly she fell asleep as did her winged steed, the trees, and the flowers. At that moment the sweetest slumber music could be heard. Softer and sweeter it grew as she slept. A sweet smile spread over her face. She had done what she thought was right, and though she was no more a War-Maiden, she still was and will always be the heroic Brunhilde.

SLUMBER MOTIVE.

Wotan took his spear and with it marked a magic circle about the sleeping one. Then lifting it high in the air he called upon the fire. Instantly it came and surrounded his beloved companion and daughter. Great red flames shot up almost to the sky. The fire crackled and roared, but Brunhilde still slumbered.

Wotan walked slowly and sadly back to Walhalla, and again he heard the curse, "Only sorrow and unhappiness shall follow him who possesses the ring."

Day after day, week after week, and year after year rolled by. Still Brunhilde slept, awaiting the hero who knew no fear who was to come and waken her.

SIEGFRIED.

I.

SIEGFRIED.

I.

Long, long, indeed, seemed the days to Wotan. Again and again did his thoughts carry him back to the day when Walhalla first stood before him in all its splendid beauty. Many were the times when in his memory the great frost giant, Fafner, stood before him demanding all the gold, even the ring. Is it any wonder that the days seemed long to him?

But everything was different with Fafner, for he now had what he had always desired,—a great pile of gold and magic power. He very seldom thought of Walhalla. His thoughts were of nothing but the gold.

First he carried his treasure,—the gold, the magic helmet, and the fated ring,—far

away to his own country. But hardly had he reached his home when he realized that the gold would not be safe, for at any moment some one might come and steal it away.

Again he gathered up his treasure and started to look over all the world to find the best and safest place for it. The journey would have seemed very long to us but to him it was the work of only three or four days, for with a single step he could cover miles of distance.

River after river he crossed, stepping over many a high mountain, speeding across far reaching plains and deserts, till at last he came to a great dark forest. The forest was dark because the trees grew so close to one another that their branches overlapped and kept out the sunlight. In some places, however, the trees were not so close, and there the sun shone warm and bright all the day.

This forest was the home of many fierce wild animals, especially of bears.

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed Fafner, as he looked about him. "Here I can live with my gold. No one will be apt to come into this wild place."

So he pushed his way into the dark forest until he came to a deep, black cave. All the time he held close to him the bags which contained his treasure.

"Just the place!" said he, as he peered into the cave. "Here I will stay day and night with my gold. In this doorway I will sit forever to guard my hoard."

As he sat there he heard the lions roaring, the bears growling and the leaves rustling as they talked to the wind. Fafner's face looked more like shadow than sunlight as he crouched near his gold.

"Some wanderer might possibly pass by my cave," thought he, "and in some way

discover my gold and steal it. What can I do to make it more safe?"

Suddenly his face changed. Jumping up he grasped the magic helmet.

"I know what I will do. I will put this helmet on my head and change into a dragon, so great and fierce and ugly that no one will dare come near me."

And all for the sake of the gold, he put on the magic helmet and the change came. He was no longer the great frost giant, but a fierce and terrible dragon. He did not stand erect and mighty like the great giant that he had been, but lay squirming and twisting,—a huge, awful serpent.

He was more terrible than you can imagine. His body was somewhat like that of a whale, while his skin was covered with slimy green scales. His tail was long and pointed, and in the end was a sting of deadly poison.

His teeth were sharp like a saw, and he breathed out fiery smoke so hot and poisonous that should it touch anyone it would kill him instantly.

This was what the frost giant, the mighty Fafner, changed himself into for a pile of gold!

Meantime, Alberich and all the other Nibelungs were having a very uncomfortable, unhappy time, for each one was trying to think how he could manage to get possession of the gold again. Alberich's face seemed to grow blacker and blacker each day, and he was so cross and ugly that no one dared to go near him.

Mime, Alberich's brother, was also plotting and planning how he could steal away the gold.

The Nibelungs in one way were not so afraid of Mime as they were of Alberich

for he did not frighten them with such terrible threats. But he was very sly and untruthful, so they could never believe anything he said. One day there was great excitement in this underground kingdom, for Mime was missing. They searched in every place, but nowhere was he to be found. Then Alberich was still uglier for he felt sure Mime was in some way going to find the gold, and he wanted to get it for himself.

The night before, when all were asleep, Mime had silently stolen away from his underground home. He had taken with him a number of his tools that he might still forge chains and swords and many other things which a blacksmith makes.

These ugly little Nibelungs had a queer, sly way of finding out all sorts of things which were not meant for them to know. No one ever knew how they learned these

things, strange, sly little dwarfs that they were. It was not to be wondered at that they heard strange earth voices speaking to them when no one else could hear. It must have been in some such way as this that Mime found out about the fated gold, because, although he did not know just where it was, he did know that in a dark forest somewhere Fafner, in the shape of a huge dragon, was guarding it. And so, in hopes of stealing the gold, Mime came from his dark, dreary home to live above the earth.

He wandered many days before he could find any trace of the dragon. It was in the springtime, and the earth was just budding into new beauty. The flowers were in bloom and giving out their sweetest perfume. The trees had just put out new leaves, while hidden in their branches were many little nests in which sat mother

birds upon the eggs, soon to tell their secret.

The whole earth rang with the glad, joyous song of springtime. But Mime did not notice any of these beauties, for there was no springtime in his heart. All his thoughts were of the gold and the magic ring.

At last he succeeded in finding the cave in which lived the fearful dragon guarding the fated gold. Mime often crouched for hours in some dark part of the forest, trying to plan some way to gain possession of the gold and the ring. But he knew, deep down in his heart, that he, himself, could never kill the dragon, for he was a coward, and one must be without fear to dare face such a monster.

At last Mime's plans were completed. He had decided to find a cave in another part of the forest and there spend his days

forging a sword strong enough to slay the dragon.

"But I will not dare go near enough to kill him even though I may forge a sword stout enough to pierce his heart," thought he. "Ah! now I have it! There in my cave I will work day and night until a sword shall be made which no human power can break. Then I will wait until a hero, strong and brave, shall come through the forest. I will deceive him so that he will kill for me the dragon, and then—then I will destroy the hero, and the gold shall be mine!"

As Mime said this his face looked blacker and more repulsive than before. Very little time was lost before he was settled in a cave in another part of the forest. Here he heaped a pile of stones, and on them placed his anvil, while near by he made a forge of large, rough rocks.

Many days and nights the queer little Nibelung spent trying to forge the sword of which he had dreamed, but it was in vain, for when he struck the sword upon a stone, it would break into pieces. Often, tired and almost discouraged with his wicked work, Mime would walk far into the forest, but this he never enjoyed, for the growling of the bears, and the roaring of the lions struck terror to his cowardly heart.

However, one morning he ventured a little farther than usual into the woods, hoping he might in some way learn how to make the sword. Suddenly he stopped, for he heard a cry like that of a little baby. He listened, and again the same cry was heard. His first thought was to run back to his cave. Then he decided to find whence came the cry. He did not have to go far, for almost at his feet lay a

little baby boy, hardly more than a day old.

There was something in the child's face which made Mime know that when he was grown to manhood he would be one of earth's bravest heroes. Stooping to look more closely at the baby, Mime's eyes caught sight of a broken sword, and he knew at once that this sword, when mended, would be the weapon of his dreams, for it was large and sharp and made of the strongest steel in the world.

He thought for a moment, then said "I will take the baby, bring him up to be a strong man and then have him, with this sword, slay the dragon. Afterwards I can in some way rid myself of him, and the gold and the ring will be mine!"

So he lifted the beautiful baby boy in his arms, picked up the broken sword, and was about to start for his cave when he

heard a mysterious voice say "Siegfried is the name of the child, and Nothung the name of the magic sword, and only he who knows no fear can weld it together."

Mime looked all about him to see whence came the voice, but no one could be seen. Again it was heard, fainter and farther away this time, "Siegfried is the name of the child, and Nothung the name of the magic sword, and only he who knows no fear can weld it together."

"Aha!" laughed Mime, "whoever it is that spoke, does not know of my cunning work. I can easily mend the sword! Magic, magic," he chuckled as he turned away with the baby and the sword in his arms. "Magic! So much the better! All the more confident now, am I, that when mended it will pierce the heart of the dragon."

The first thing Mime did on reaching the

cave was to hide the sword where he was quite sure it would never be discovered. Next he brought skins and placed them on a huge, hollow log. This was the baby's bed.

"I will be as good as I can to the child, and give him the right kind of food, so that he may grow up to be of use to me," thought the dwarf.

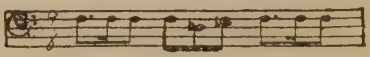
How different this baby's life was from the lives of our babies! He had no loving mother to sing him to sleep at night and to comfort him when he felt unhappy over some little sorrow, and above all, to tell him strange, wonderful stories of brave heroes who had given their lives to protect weaker ones.

He never saw anyone but Mime,—never knew that anyone else lived but the strange little Nibelung.

Mime, however, was as kind to the baby,

in his rough way, as he knew how to be. Every morning when the sun was shining he would carry him out of the cave and place him under the trees that he might lie and kick out his little limbs and, breathing in the fresh forest air, listen to the merry songs of the birds as they flew through the blue sky far above the tops of the trees.

Mime now very seldom left his cave, and day after day could be heard his strange, unhappy song.



NIBELUNG MOTIVE.

He had but one thought now, and that was of the baby growing to a strong man that he might kill the dragon. So he watched with great interest the growth of the child. Each day little Siegfried

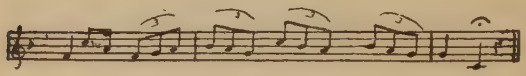
grew stronger and stronger so that before long he could walk. Then came very happy days for him.

He would wander into the forests quite away from the cave and sit and listen to the wind as it whispered to the trees. Often a little baby bear would come up to him and play with him for hours at a time. Sometimes the mother bear would come and lie on the grass near by, watching the young child playing with her baby, but she never thought of doing him any harm.

Day by day Siegfried grew more beautiful. His little arms and legs grew stronger, his body more erect, and his golden hair fell like sunbeams about his baby face which each day had more strength in it.

He was clothed in real forest dress, consisting of a little fur shirt, and skin sandals on his feet. Mime had made for him a

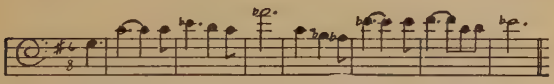
silver horn which he wore swung over his shoulders. With this horn he could call the birds and play to the bears which were his constant companions. Often would that part of the forest ring with the glad notes of his silver horn.



HORN MOTIVE.

Not only did the birds and bears respond to the call, but the mother foxes would come with their little ones, and the wolves with their cubs. They would nestle close to the young boy while he played on his horn for them. They felt his courage and loved him for it.

Happy, indeed, were these days to the young Siegfried, and this is the way the music told of them:



SIEGFRIED AS A LITTLE BOY (SIEGFRIED MOTIVE.)

Is it to be wondered at that he grew up to be all that even the grasping Mime could desire? Never was such a hero seen before. One bright sunny morning, triumphant in the strength of his young manhood, Siegfried stood before Mime, demanding a sword so strong that he could not break it.

Mime was such a cowardly dwarf that the brave youth could not do otherwise than despise him, and he very seldom stayed in the cave. This was the reason he demanded a strong sword, for he was planning to leave Mime and the forest and see something of the world, but he would not go without some means of defense.

"The sword must be made by the time I return," said the youth as he disappeared in the forest.

"Now is my time! At last, at last, the gold will be mine!" cried Mime.

Cautiously he crept to the place where the broken sword had been laid away for so many years. Again he heard the words, "It is a magic sword, and only he who knows no fear can weld it together."

"That voice does not know of my cunning as a smith," laughed Mime, as he hastened to the bellows.

He blew the fire to a white heat and plunged the sword in, and made ready his hammer and anvil. Then drawing the sword from the fire he pounded it as he had never pounded before, trying to weld it together. But to his horror he could make no impression upon it. Again the

voice, "Only he who knows no fear can weld it together."

"Alas, alas!" cried Mime, "I can never do it. Whom now can I get to mend me the sword?"

Again and again did he try, but it was of no use.

Meanwhile Siegfried had gone far into the forest and thrown himself upon the ground. Putting his horn to his lips he called to his friends, the forest beasts and birds. Soon he was answered by singing birds, huge bears, cunning foxes, and wolves. Each mother that day had brought her babies with her. Siegfried said very little to them, for he was thinking strange sweet thoughts.

"How kind all the forest beasts are to their little ones, and the babies look just like their mothers and fathers. Who is my mother?" cried Siegfried.

With this he sprang up and ran to a stream close by and looked in. There he saw his own image reflected. Large, strong, and erect was his body; pure, true, and brave was his face. Long he stood gazing at his reflection in the water and thinking "Why should not I look like my mother and father? All the forest creatures do. I am no longer a boy. I am a man, and this very day I will make Mime tell me who I am, and who my parents are. He cannot be my father, for I do not look at all like him. Mime is cowardly and sly, but the sight of a bear will frighten him so that he will not dare tell me anything but the truth."

Again he blew his horn and a great black bear came running up to him. Siegfried fastened a rope about the bear's neck, and together they started for the cave in which dwelt the cowardly Mime, who would

so soon have to tell Siegfried who he was and why he was living in the forests with a little ugly sly dwarf, when he himself was so brave and true.

SIEGFRIED.

II.

II.

Siegfried, leading the bear, soon reached the cave of the dwarf.

"Mime," he called, "Where are you? Why do you not come from your hiding place? I know you are somewhere in the cave. Come and see what a nice playfellow I have brought from the forest."

Mime, who had crouched with fear behind the forge, lifted his head, but at the sight of the bear standing with Siegfried at the entrance of the cave, he again shrank behind the forge.

"Come out at once, you sly little dwarf. I have many questions I wish to ask you," said Siegfried.

"Let the bear go. Then I will come."

With this the bear only growled the

louder, and that frightened the Nibelung even more.

"Let the bear go," he cried, "and I will answer every question you ask."

"If you were not such a coward, the bear would not growl at you," replied Siegfried. "Still, if you will not come until I let him go, I will send him away. But before I do that you must promise to answer every question I ask."

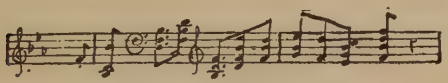
"Yes, yes, all shall be answered."

Siegfried let go the rope which held the bear, and the beast ran back into the forest. Mime then crept cautiously from behind the forge, looking in every direction to be sure the bear was no longer near.

"Come closer," demanded Siegfried, "What a coward you are!"

The dwarf crept nearer. He seemed more cowardly than ever as he approached the youth. Siegfried was brave and fear-

less, and his young face shone with a new light as he looked down upon the crouching figure of the Nibelung, and this is the way the music tells us of Siegfried the Fearless:



SIEGFRIED THE FEARLESS.

"Mime, today I have been watching the forest beasts with their little ones. The baby birds are like the mother and father birds. The young bear resembles its parents, and the wolf cubs bear likeness to the older ones. The time has come now when you must tell me who I am. I know you cannot be my father for there is no resemblance between us."

"What difference does it make to you who your parents are so long as I love you?" said Mime.

"You do not truly love me. You are sly and cowardly and untruthful. Tell me who I am!" and with flashing eyes and his powerful arms uplifted he sprang toward Mime.

"Stop! Stop!" cried the dwarf, shielding his head with his arm, "I will tell you all."

Then in low, sullen tones he told Siegfried how he had found him, a tiny baby, in the forest, and how, as he lifted him from the ground, a voice had said, "Siegfried is the name of the child," but Mime was very careful not to say one word about the sword.

"How do I know you are telling me the truth?" said Siegfried angrily. "I must have some proof. Show me something that will prove to me what you say is true."

Mime knew by Siegfried's tone that it

would be dangerous to refuse, so he crept behind the forge and brought out the broken sword, Nothung.

"Here is the proof. This broken sword lay by your side when I found you,"

"Broken," said Siegfried, as he examined it closely, "but it is made of the best steel. How it shines! How strong it will be when mended! Mend it for me, Mime. This is what I have waited and longed to possess. As soon as the sword is mended I will leave this hated cave forever and go forth into the world to see what it is like."

Turning his face, which was now white with fear, toward Siegfried, Mime said, "Alas, Alas! I cannot mend the sword!"

"You have boasted long of your cunning as a smith. Why can you not do what I ask? If you are skillful enough with your tools to make a silver horn you

ought surely to be able to mend a sword," replied Siegfried impatiently.

"Listen to me," said the dwarf, cowering and cringing from head to foot. "The voice which told me your name in the forest so many years ago also told me this: 'Nothung is the name of the sword. It is a magic sword and only he who knows no fear can weld it together.'"

"I do not wonder, then," thundered Siegfried, that you could do nothing with it. Give me the sword and I will weld it together."

He seized the broken sword and impatiently strode toward a huge file which was fastened to the forge and began to file it to dust which fell into a small basin.

"You are spoiling the sword!" screamed Mime.

"On no, I am not," laughed Siegfried as he filed the faster.

Soon the sword, all but the handle, was changed into sparkling dust. He then took the basin which held the powder and placed it on the forge. Reaching up he grasped the bellows and worked it until the fire had melted the powder into a glowing liquid. Close at hand was the mold, and into it he poured the glowing mass.

For one moment he stood with beating heart, wondering if Nothung would be all he expected when he opened the mold. Carefully he lifted the cover, and there lay the perfect sword. Quickly seizing it with a huge pair of pinchers, Siegfried hurried to the forge and plunged the sword into the fire which was kept at a white heat by the bellows. Allowing it to remain for a moment only in the fierce fire, he grasped it again with the pinchers and laid it, red hot, upon the anvil. Seiz-

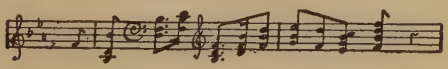
ing his huge hammer, with heavy strokes he pounded it until the edges were sharp and thin. Then, again heating it, he fastened it to the handle.

At last it was finished, and Siegfried held it up and felt the edges. They must be even sharper for so trusty a sword. For the last time he placed it in the fire, and blew the bellows even faster than before. Once more it was red hot. As he laid it on the anvil and pounded it, the sparks flew in every direction, and Siegfried, filled with joy, sang of the sword and the work it would one day do. Faster and faster fell the mighty hammer. Thinner and sharper grew the keen edges until the young hero threw aside the hammer, and flourishing the sword in all its new glory above his head, burst into a new, glad, triumphant sword song:

"Nothung, Nothung! Wonderful sword!
Thy life again have I given!"

SWORD MOTIVE.

With one powerful blow of the sword, the anvil fell in pieces. How the cave rang with the sword of Nothung, and right with it came the music of Siegfried the Fearless.



SIEGFRIED THE FEARLESS.

Mime, terrified at the light which shone from the sparks as they flew about, and also at Siegfried's strength, had fallen upon the ground in another part of the cave. There he lay on his face until Siegfried called to him.

"Now that I have such a trusty sword, I will leave the cave forever. All over

the world will I seek for new tests of my strength, and never again will I come back to you, Mime. Is there anything you wish to say to me before I start?"

"Yes, I have much to say," answered the dwarf as he slowly raised his body. "Sit down and I will tell you.

"You are a strong youth, and brave, as well, but one thing you do not know."

"Tell me what that one thing is," said the impatient youth.

"It is fear," said Mime.

"Fear," said Siegfried. "What is fear?"

"Have you never felt your whole body tremble and your heart beat fast and loud when the wild beasts were growling near you? Have you never run to escape them?"

"No, never, Mime. You have taught me many things. Now teach me fear.

Take me to the place where I shall know what you mean by fear."

"Very well," said the sly Mime. "Far distant in the forest is Hate Cavern, the home of the terrible dragon, Fafner. I will take you there, and you will learn fear at once."

"A dragon,—what is a dragon?" asked Siegfried.

"A dragon is the animal of all animals which most terrifies man, and this one is the most dangerous of them all. The cavern where he dwells has never been approached by mortal since he took up his abode there.

"He is like a huge, awful worm. He does not walk, but twists and turns his slimy body as he crawls in the dust. His tail has a fatal sting and is long and pointed. No one dares approach him, for if he tries to come from the back, the dra-

gon will be sure to sting him, and if he comes near his head or sides, the poisonous breath will bring instant death."

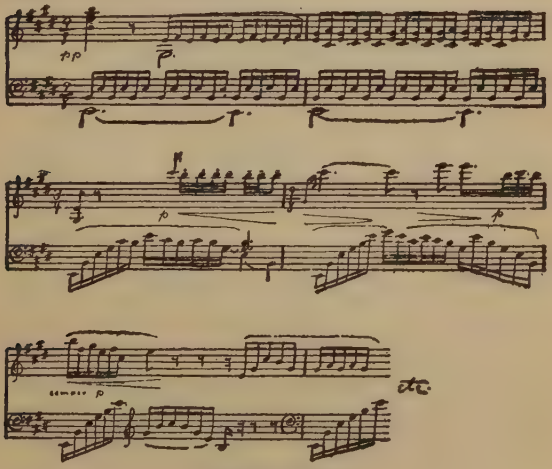
"Oh, that is nothing of which to be afraid," laughed Siegfried. "He will make me a nice playfellow. But come, let us be off. I am anxious to see this dragon and know if he can teach me fear."

Mime strapped his drinking horn to his belt, and going to an inner part of the cave, filled it with some mysterious liquid. Then turning to Siegfried he said, "I am ready."

All that night they traveled silently through the forest. Each was busy with his own thoughts, so neither spoke. As the sun was rising Mime said "Let us stop here. Straight ahead, at some distance, is the cavern where Fafner dwells. I will wait for you here. Now go, and learn well your lesson."

Siegfried was only too glad to get away from the cowardly dwarf. How free and happy he felt as he walked on with Nothung in his hand.

"There is the cave. I will lie down here in the sunshine and wait for the dragon," said he, half aloud, as he threw himself upon a huge log.



FOREST LIFE.

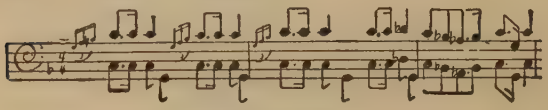
The bright morning sun shone on his golden hair, and there was a new light in his eyes as he looked up at the trees. Soon he heard the beautiful song of a forest bird. It was like the music above.

So sweet was the song that he scarcely moved.

"The bird is certainly singing to me. Why can I not understand her?" thought he. "I will make a whistle from a reed and see if I can answer her."

Springing up, he seized a reed. The whistle was soon made and he tried to answer the bird. But he did not succeed for the bird would not listen.

"I will try my horn," thought he, and putting the horn to his lips he blew it loud and clear. But instead of the bird song, this is what he heard:



GIANT MOTIVE.

"Oh ho! That must be the dragon!"

Again he heard the noise, and, sure enough, the squirming, crawling body of the awful monster appeared, coming nearer and nearer to him.

"Who are you?" growled the dragon.

"I am Siegfried, and Mime said you would teach me what fear is."

"I will eat you!"

The dragon ground his teeth together and thrust out his long, red tongue. His ugly face grew darker and darker.

"Oh, but you are much mistaken," laughed the youth.

This infuriated the dragon, and as he snorted there poured forth fiery smoke that was deadly poison. Siegfried, however, was wise enough to keep out of the reach of the poisonous smoke, and it did not harm him.

"Come nearer to me if you know no fear," sneered the dragon.

"Yes, that I will," said Siegfried.

With these words he sprang forward and plunged into the heart of the dragon, Nothung, the mighty sword.

"Cursed is the Ring and only sorrow and unhappiness will follow him who possesses it," gasped the dragon as he fell over dead.

Siegfried drew his dripping sword from the body of the monster. As he did so one drop of the dragon's blood fell upon his hand. It burned as if a coal of fire had touched his hand and instinctively he thrust it into his mouth to stop the pain. A sudden change came over him. He stood spell-bound, and listened amazed, for he heard the bird notes as words:

"Mime is wicked and cowardly. He loves no one. Everyone who comes near him he harms. He is at this moment mak-

SIEGFRIED SLAYS THE DRAGON.

ing poison with which to kill you. So, brave youth, you must kill him before he does anyone else harm," sang the bird.

Siegfried entered the cave where the dragon for so many years had lived with the gold. He took the Ring and the magic Helmet, but left the bags of gold. He put the Ring on his finger and carried the Helmet in his hand. In this way he left the cave and met Mime approaching, carrying very carefully the drinking horn.

"Here is a nice cool drink for you, my boy, after your hard work."

Eyeing him sternly, Siegfried said, "That is poison. I will not touch it." With that he hurled the horn from Mime's trembling hand, and with Nothung, killed the cowardly, wicked Nibelung.

Once more Seigfried threw himself on the log, but this time his thoughts were different.

"I am lonely. Would that my mother were here."

LOVE MOTIVE (LOVE LIFE.)

Again the birds sang:

"I will tell you of someone who will love you—love you better than all the world. High on yonder mountain, surrounded by fire, sleeps a beautiful maiden, awaiting the hero who knows no fear to awaken her. Follow me and I will show you the way."

Filled with joy, Siegfried sprang to his feet and followed the little singer. It was a weary way, but the longing for love made it seem short. Suddenly the bird

disappeared, and Siegfried came face to face with the mighty Wotan.

Wotan, king of all the giants, was much larger than Siegfried, and in his hand he carried the mighty spear with which he ruled the world.

"Where are you going, young man?" asked Wotan.

"Yonder on the mountain, upon a rock surrounded by fire, sleeps a beautiful maiden, who, when I shall awaken her, will always love me."

"Dare you face the fire?" Wotan spoke slowly.

"I am not afraid! Do not delay me!" and Siegfried attempted to pass.

"Stop!" commanded the giant king.

"I will not!" replied the fearless hero.

"Stand back, you shall not go," thundered the giant. "My all-powerful, mighty spear shall prevent you. Do you

think, brave as you are, that you can shatter the spear which for hundreds of years has ruled the world?"

Siegfried answered not a word, but raising Nothung high in the air, and with more than giant strength brought it down upon the mighty spear. A great crash was heard as the spear fell in two pieces at the feet of the king.

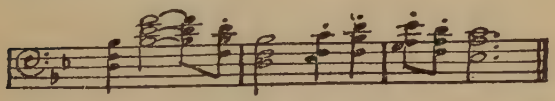
"Go forward," said Wotan, slowly bowing his head, "I can no longer prevent you. Some power stronger than giant power must rule the world," and turning he went silently to Walhalla.

Siegfried, filled with hope, began to ascend the mountain. He had not climbed far when he noticed the increased heat in the air.

"I must be near the circle of fire," thought he, and sure enough, as he looked he saw the bright red flames shoot-

ing almost up to the sky. Nearer and nearer he came, and hotter and hotter grew the flames. Soon he stood before the fire.

"Only the fire between me and the one I am to love,—the one who is to love me," cried he, and with a leap he sprang into the fire. And this is the wonderful music which tells us of Siegfried as he went through the fire.

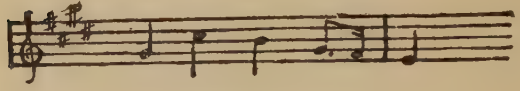


SIEGFRIED THE HERO.

Unharmed, and without one touch of the fire Siegfried stood before the sleeping one. Somewhat confused, he looked about him.

"All the trees are sleeping; so are the flowers, and a horse lies asleep under the tree, and there rests a beautiful young

knight. I will go nearer and remove the shield.



SLUMBER MOTIVE.

Slowly he crept nearer the sleeping figure and took away the shield, but under that was a coat of mail.

"This coat I must also remove, but it is fastened with steel rings. Come, Nothung, and cut them."

Very carefully he cut the rings, and the coat of mail fell jingling to the ground.

"Now I will lift the helmet," said he.

Tenderly Siegfried lifted the helmet, and Brunhilde's golden hair fell in long curls over her.

"Oh! It is not a man!" cried Siegfried as he sprang back.

His whole body was trembling and his heart beat fast and loud.

"Now I know what fear is," said he, "A beautiful maiden! Can she love me? Why does she not waken?"

Several times he called, but she still slept on.

Tremblingly he approached, and stood long, gazing thoughtfully upon her. Then he bent and tenderly kissed her, and instantly she awoke, as did all about her.

Slowly she raised herself and looked all around her. Long she gazed at her horse; then, lifting her eyes, she beheld the sunshine, and all the sunshine in her responded in a song.

"Hail, Thou Sunshine!"

These were her first words on awakening from her long, long slumber. Then she noticed Siegfried.

"You are Siegfried the Fearless. You

are the hero who dared come through the fire to rescue me!"

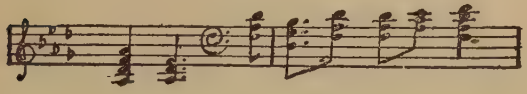
"Yes, the bird sang to me of you and of the love which would be mine, could I but waken you."

"You are my brave hero, and I will love you always, yes, love you more than the whole world. And as a pledge of my love I will give you my brave winged horse. He it was who carried the brave heroes to Walhalla. Although the power of his wings is gone, he is still the swiftest horse on all the earth. He shall be no more Brunhilde's, but Siegfried's horse.

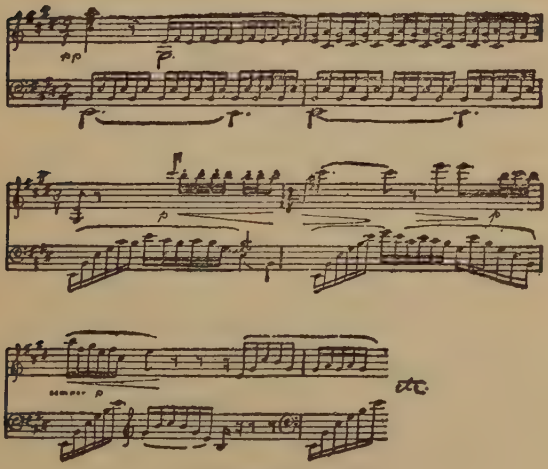
"Brunhilde, my pledge of love to you shall be this ring. What joy it is to have someone to love!" and not heeding the warning of the dragon, Siegfried placed the ring on Brunhilde's finger.

Long they sat talking together. Sometimes their joy would burst forth into song.

Brunhilde sang of her life in the beautiful Palace of Walhalla

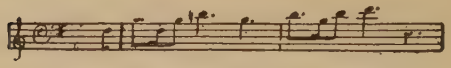


and Siegfried of his free forest life.



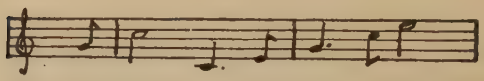
FOREST LIFE.

Brunhilde sang of the War Maidens,

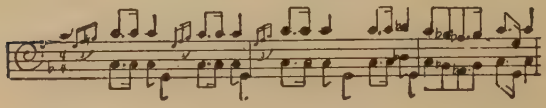


RIDE OF THE WAR MAIDENS.

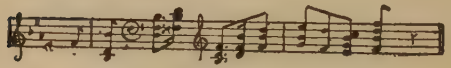
Siegfried of his sword, Nothung,



and of the dragon he had slain,



GIANT MOTIVE.



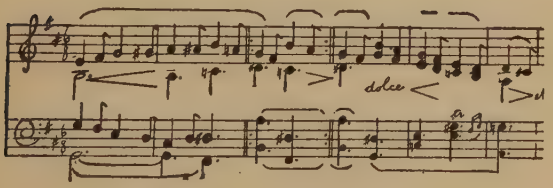
SIEGFRIED THE FEARLESS.

also of the magic fire and the slumbering maiden,

SIEGFRIED THE HERO.

SLUMBER MOTIVE.

but the music which told of their love was sweeter than all the rest.



LOVE MOTIVE (LOVE LIFE.)

Brunhilde thought no more of Walhalla. Siegfried no more of Mime. So filled with love were they that the whole world seemed to have gained new glory for them.

DIE GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.

DIE GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG.

After Siegfried had cut the spear in pieces with Nothung, Wotan returned sadly to Walhalla. Eager for news all the giants gathered around him, but they were slow to speak when they noticed the broken spear. At last one of them said:

"Wotan, what is troubling you? You do not look as happy as you did when you went away."

"No! No! No! I am not happy! Happiness will never again be ours. While walking upon the earth I met Siegfried, the fearless hero. He was then on his way up the mountain to awaken the sleeping Brunhilde. I tried to detain him with my spear which hitherto has conquered all

things, but love was in his heart, and with one blow of his trusty sword he cut the spear in two pieces. Now I know that our giant power will no longer rule the world, but something stronger will soon reign in its place. Alas! Alas! Alberich's curse is coming true."

As Wotan was speaking, a cloud crept slowly over the sky.

Siegfried and Brunhilde, meantime, were spending the hours happily together. One day Brunhilde called Siegfried to her.

"Siegfried, you were indeed brave to kill the dragon. Braver still were you to come through the fire. Are you brave enough now to leave me for a time?

"If you are a true hero you must go and do more brave deeds. To remain always by my side would be to forget all else. Your trusty sword would rust in its sheath were it never used. And I, too, must learn

new courage, for if I truly love you, as I do, I must send you away from me that you may gain new strength."

Siegfried listened intently while Brunhilde was speaking.

"You are right, Brunhilde. I will go, but you will always be in my thoughts. I shall not stay away long, but I shall not return until I have done some brave deed worthy of your praise."

So Siegfried, the Hero, dressed in full armor and, riding Brunhilde's war horse, left the mountain and rode through the fire into what was to him a new world. His journey was long, but the war horse traveled so swiftly that they passed over hundreds of miles in the time it would take us to travel one.

Finally he neared the Rhine, and, seeing a boat, he sprang in and called to his horse to follow. He pushed the boat far

into the river and sped on. At last he neared a large palace.

In this palace there lived a very wicked man who was a friend of Alberich, and his name was Hagen. Alberich had talked much of the gold, and they had many times discussed the power of the magic helmet and the ring.

Hagen was also anxious to gain the ring and the gold. He, like Alberich, cared nothing for love. All his time was spent in thinking how he could get possession of the ring, yet he knew that Brunhilde had it, and that Siegfried had given it to her. He knew also that she lived on the mountain top, and was surrounded by fire. Again and again did Hagen say "No one but Siegfried the hero can go through the fire. If I could only lay a plan to capture this youth, and make him forget Brunhilde, I could then force him to get the ring for me."

One day he sat in the palace door thinking the same wicked thoughts when the sound of a horn reach his ears.

"It is someone coming up the river," cried he, springing to his feet. "Come, let us go and see who it is!" he called to his friends.

All hurried down to the river bank and there they saw a wonderful sight. Siegfried in full armor stood in the bow of the boat. One hand rested on his war horse, while with the other he paddled the boat against the swift current.

Hagen and all his friends stood, spellbound, hardly daring to move, for such strength as Siegfried possessed had never been seen by them.

"It can be no other than Siegfried, the hero," Hagen said at last. "Such strength belongs to no one else. See, he paddles with one hand against the current. Surely that is Siegfried."

Swiftly the boat glided to the shore, and Siegfried sprang out.

"Are you not Siegfried?" asked Hagen.

"Yes, and I have come from a beautiful mountain to seek new adventures."

"Stay with us for a time," said Hagen. "There are many wild animals here which ought to be slain, but no one is strong enough to do it. You may hunt all day and then when night falls amuse yourself by listening to fine music and interesting stories."

"You are most kind to me," replied Siegfried, not dreaming Hagen was such a wicked man. "I will accept your generous hospitality."

So the boat was drawn up on the shore, and the war horse stepped proudly out, pawing the ground impatiently.

"What a superb horse!" exclaimed Hagen, "and it has wings."

SIEGFRIED AT THE PALACE OF HAGEN.

"Yes," said Siegfried, and his eyes shone with a glad light. "He is the swiftest horse in the world, and is very dear to me."

"Can he fly?"

"Not now. Long, long years ago he had power in his wings, but that was taken away by Wotan before he was given to me."

"But come," said Hagen, "let us go in and refresh ourselves with cooling drinks and some food."

He led the way and they entered a bright, sunny room in the palace. There they ate and drank and talked of the country round about and the wild animals that Siegfried would slay.

"I am eager to be off to the hunt," said Siegfried as they finished their repast.

"I will have some of my servants show you the way at once," replied Hagen, "if you are anxious to go."

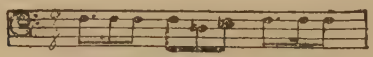
Hagen then called his servants and told them to show Siegfried the path to the forest where the ferocious animals lived. Joyfully the brave Siegfried mounted his horse and rode away. Hagen watched him until he had ridden far out of sight. Then, with a scornful leer he went into a dark room and seated himself in a corner.

"Now I can think better, here in the dark," muttered he to himself.

It is no wonder he chose a dark room, for his thoughts were darker than the blackest night.

"This youth is certainly the bravest hero in the world. How can I surely make him get the ring for me?"

Just then he heard something like this



NIBELUNG MOTIVE.

and right before him stood Alberich.

"Ah, Alberich, you here! Hateful creature! How I loathe you! Why do you not stay where you belong, down in your foul and miserable kingdom?"

"Bah! Have I not a right to come into the upper air?" and a look of hateful cunning came into his eyes. "I am here because of the ring. Why do you not get this Siegfried to get it from Brunhilde?"

"How can I do that when Siegfried all the time thinks of no one but her?"

"Listen,—I am afraid to say it very loud—the only way to do is to give him a magic drink which will make him forget her."

"How can I do that?"

"I will mix such a liquid, and when he comes in tired and warm from the hunt you can say to him, 'Here, brave Siegfried, is a cooling drink which will refresh you.' Do you understand?"

"Yes, but how will I get the ring from Brunhilde?"

"Leave that to me and all will be well. After he has swallowed the magic potion we will make him take the ring from Brunhilde," and with these words Alberich vanished. But on the table near where he had been standing was a drinking horn in which was the magic liquid.

"Aha!" exclaimed the wicked Hagen, "the ring will soon be mine, mine, mine! Alberich thinks I will give it to him, but he is greatly mistaken," and he laughed loudly.

Just then Siegfried's silver horn could be heard clear and sweet in the distance. Nearer and nearer it came, and Hagen, seizing the drinking horn, went out to meet him.

"I have slain one of the wild animals," said Siegfried as Hagen approached him.

"Then we have much for which to thank you," said Hagen, smiling and bowing in seeming politeness, "but before you do anything else refresh yourself with this cool drink."

"Thank you," returned Siegfried. "This is very pleasant country about here. I think I will remain for a while."

His thoughts then for the first time were more of his own pleasure than of his beloved Brunhilde, so, carelessly, he put the horn to his lips and drank the magic potion. Instantly Brunhilde was forgotten.

After this a change came over Siegfried. He went no more to the hunt, but staid in the palace and did nothing but feast and have a good time. As the days went by he seemed more and more intent upon enjoying himself. So eager was he for his own pleasure that he forgot even his trusty Nothung, and the sword which could do so

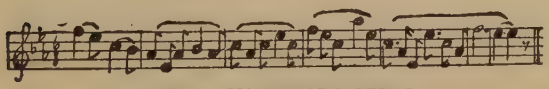
much hung unused upon the wall of the palace. Strange that he could have forgotten that day in the forest when he forged Nothung anew. But everything was forgotten save his own pleasure.

High up on the mountain, surrounded by the magic fire, waited Brunhilde.

"Why does not my Siegfried come back to me. The days are long and dreary. The air is close and heavy. Darkness is spreading over the earth. Some evil must have befallen my hero, for he said he would return to me soon, and it has been many long weeks since he went away. I feel that he needs me. I will go to him. Yes, I will go at once," and Brunhilde sprang up. "I will start this very moment." And as the night was falling over the earth, guided by love, Brunhilde walked through the fire to find her Siegfried.

Long was her journey. Day and night she traveled, but she never grew weary, for always she heard the voice telling her that Siegfried was in need of her.

Early one morning she heard singing and stopped for a moment to listen.



RHINE DAUGHTERS MOTIVE.

Before her was the River Rhine, and there were the Rhine Daughters singing of their lost gold and the ring and the curse upon it.

"Why does not some one give the ring back and break the curse?" thought Brunhilde as she stood gazing at the scene before her.

Hagen, in the meantime, began to think it was about time for Siegfried to get the ring for him.

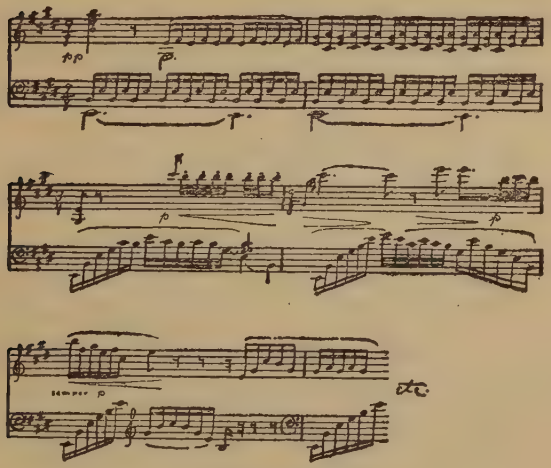
"I will insist upon having it today! It is early morning now. Before night the ring shall be mine."

So he blew his horn, called his men to him and sent them in search of Siegfried.

In the meantime, however, Siegfried had risen early and wandered about the palace, seeking for some new pleasure. Suddenly his eye caught sight of the forgotten Nothung hanging on the wall.

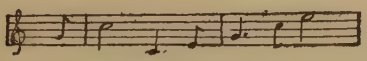
"A hunt will be the best enjoyment for me this morning," said he, as he buckled on the sword.

With these thoughts he mounted his horse and rode away, but the horse seemed not to travel so swiftly as it once did. Many times he stopped and dismounted when he heard the noise of an animal, but could get none of them. Finally he stopped the horse and threw himself down on the grass. All at once he heard a bird singing.



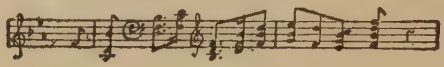
FOREST LIFE.

"I was in a forest, too. That was a long time ago. Yes, and it was at that time I forged my Nothung anew and gave it new



SWORD MOTIVE.

life," and Siegfried's face became lighter as memory became clearer. "Yes, and I killed the dragon.

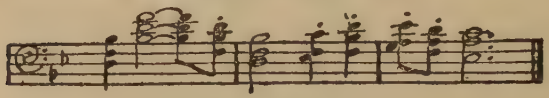


SIEGFRIED THE FEARLESS.

"Mime's heart also was pierced with Nothung. I also tasted the dragon's blood, and Oh, yes, yes, it was then I understood the bird, and she sang of a magic fire,—of a sleeping maiden

SLUMBER MOTIVE.

Yes, and I went through the fire



SIEGFRIED THE HERO.

and ——"

Suddenly he stopped and sprang up, for

he heard something sweeter and dearer to him than all else in the world.

BRUNHILDE.—LOVE MOTIVE.

His memory had returned to him and he gave a glad cry.

Brunhilde stood before him!

"I knew you needed me so I came to you, my Siegfried," said she.

Again he was the brave hero of the other days, even braver than before, for had he not overcome the power of the magic drink?

Hagen came suddenly upon them!

"The ring, the ring," he shouted. "Give

me the magic ring or you shall both die! Come men, and take the ring!"

Noble indeed then was Brunhilde, as, drawing her majestic body to its queenly height, with one sweep of her arm she commanded the army of men to stand back.

Slowly she drew the ring from her finger and clasped it in her hand. Raising it high above her head, she told all to listen to what she was about to say. Clear and ringing was her voice as she spoke.

She told them the sad history of the ring. How Alberich had stolen the gold from the Rhine Daughters,—its rightful owners, and by giving up love had been able to make a magic ring of it. This ring had cursed all who possessed it.

Fafner, the mighty frost giant, and even Wotan, king of all giants and ruler of the world, had felt its curse. She told them

SIEGFRIED UNDERSTANDS THE SONG OF THE RHINE DAUGHTERS.

that giant power was about to vanish forever from the earth that it might give place to love. That in their thirst for gold they had given up all that made the world beautiful, for all was useless without love.

No one moved while she was speaking.

"The transformation is coming!" she cried.

A new light shone in her eyes, and with a glad triumphant shout she flung the ring back to the Rhine Daughters.

Instantly darkness settled over the earth. All was hushed and silent, for everything was changing. For days and days the sun did not shine.

At last the morning broke! The sun shone brighter than ever before, and told his message of love so plainly that no one misunderstood.

The birds awoke and caroled glad songs of love, and every mother gathered her

little children around her and told them that Walhalla and the giants were no more; that within each heart was a power stronger and purer in its strength than all the giants of Walhalla, and that was the power which would rule forever and ever.

And that power, strong and mighty, was love!

PARSIFAL.

I.

PARSIFAL.

I.

How everything changed after love had again come into the world! Again and again did the children ask to be told of Walhalla and Siegfried and about the heroic Brunhilde who had been brave enough to give the ring back to the Rhine Daughters that love might again come to rule.

It seemed as if everyone felt the change for they were kinder and nobler than they had ever been. Each person tried to do what he thought would make some one else happy; and if they loved each other so dearly, how much more did they love the kind Heavenly Father who sent the birds to sing and the sun to tell the story of His love.

So great was their love for Him that they built beautiful churches in which to worship Him and talk to each other about how they would make the world more beautiful and men's hearts happier.

The great musician who told the story of the Rhine-Gold, told another story, though it was much shorter. Indeed, it was the last story he told before the Father called him home that his great soul might respond in triumphant heavenly music to the angels' song.

This story you also are to hear. Although the hero killed no dragons and went through no fires, he was even braver than Siegfried; for when the whole world, —as it seemed to him,—was calling him to forsake the right and good, his heart was strong and brave, and he turned away, saying he could never do as they wished because his heart told him it was not right.

In the days when this story was first heard there was something which every one longed with all his soul to possess for his very own. It was the most beautiful and holy thing in all the world and it was called the Holy Grail. Everyone who had ever possessed it was made nobler and kinder than ever before, so it is no wonder that all people wished for it.

No one knew just where to find it, and what was so very strange about it was that it was found in so many different places. Some found it right in their own homes, while others had to wander over the whole world before they could possess it, and many never found it at all, for they were not ready for it. No one could find this Holy Grail and have it for his own unless he were so pure and loving that he could harbor no evil thought nor be unkind.

Once a company of strong, true knights

started in search of the Holy Grail. They were so brave that just to look at them gave one new courage, for the glad light of an unselfish life shone in their faces. They were dressed in armor, but had no horses to ride, so they could travel but slowly, and often they would get very tired.

Sometimes their way led them over stony paths, and again over hot, sandy deserts, and often before them would be seen a high, steep mountain. Sometimes they would travel all night, but oftener they would stop and rest while it was dark. At such times, after their evening prayers had been said they would throw themselves upon the ground and sleep, so as to be able to travel the faster when the morning came.

How many stories the stars and the moon could tell if we could but understand! The same stars and moon that

shine in the sky tonight kept watch while these weary knights of long ago slept and dreamed of the Holy Grail.

When morning broke these brave knights would arise, and after the morning prayer of thanksgiving, would again press on. They did not stop for breakfast, but ate their simple food while they were on their way.

Early one morning they came to a great forest. Tired, and almost disheartened, they stopped.

"We must not remain here," said their leader, whose name was Amfortas. "When you are tired think of the joy that awaits us when we have found the Holy Grail. A little weariness must not be thought of now."

Encouraged by his words the knights entered the dark forest. On and on they traveled, and strange as it may seem, the

farther into the forest they went, the less weary they grew. It was no wonder, for though they did not know it, they were coming nearer the Holy Grail.

"Let us stop here, comrades," said Amfortas, "and again thank our Heavenly Father for bringing us thus far."

So once more they knelt and prayed, thanking the Great Father for His goodness, and asking Him if they might not this day find the Holy Grail.

As they knelt in prayer a great light filled the forest above their heads. They rose to their feet. Not a knight spoke, for it seemed as if the Father must be with them. With faces upturned they listened, and a voice coming from the very center of the light spoke to them saying, "Here you have found the Holy Grail. Build here a beautiful church in which to worship by prayer and song your Heavenly

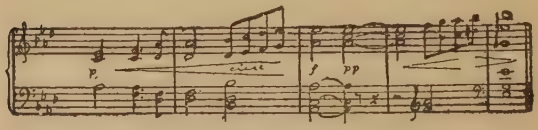
Father, but should any one need you, go to him at once though he be thousands of miles away. From this time on you shall be called the Knights of the Holy Grail, and Amfortas shall be your king."

The voice ceased. Again the knights fell on their knees and worshiped God. When they arose the great light had vanished, but in the face of each brave knight shone a new, peaceful light, for they knew that at last they had found what they had been for so many years striving to gain.

It always happened that whenever anyone found the Holy Grail the light came and the voice spoke, although the messages were always different. It did not tell everyone to build churches, but it told these knights to do so.

They lost no time in obeying, and soon in the midst of the forest stood the most beautiful church in the world,—the Church

of the Holy Grail. It was indeed beautiful with its great stained glass windows through which the light shone in many rich colors, but the most wonderful thing about it was the music which told always of the Holy Grail.



GRAIL MOTIVE.

Each day the knights went into the church to pray, for if they were always to be brave and pure their needs must have daily help from Heaven.

Far distant in this same forest was an enchanted palace in which lived a very wicked man. So wicked was he that his life was given up to doing harmful deeds. Surrounding this palace was a garden of enchanted flowers. They were large,

bright-colored blossoms, and gave none of the sweet perfume of the pure white lily of the valley or of the deep blue violet.

The wicked man, who was known as a magician, had magic power and he did many harmful things. One of his most wicked deeds was to keep a very beautiful woman under his spell. He commanded her to sing in this garden when brave knights were passing by that she might entice them to come in. If once they entered they were also bound by this wicked man's power. Not only did this woman sing, but all the flowers sang with her, so that it took a knight even braver than Siegfried to resist going into the garden.

Amfortas and all of his knights knew of this palace, and it gave them much uneasiness for they knew the harm its master could do. At last Amfortas decided to go with his knights to that part of the forest

and break the power of the magician's spell by destroying the palace.

As they started Amfortas warned them not to stop for a moment to listen to the music as they passed by the garden. In his hand he carried a holy spear which he had once captured from a Christian pilgrim. So holy and wonderful was this spear that were it used in the right way it could destroy all evil and bring joy and happiness.

As the knights journeyed through the forest they sang of their holy church and the joy that would be theirs when the magic palace should be destroyed.

Nearer and nearer they came. At first they could hear only a faint sound, but soon they heard the fatal singing. All stood more erect than before as if to resist the temptation. As they approached the garden all the bright flowers could be seen,

and they sang louder and louder as the knights advanced.

Slowly and manfully the knights walked by,—all but Amfortas, their king, who was riding behind the others. As he approached, carrying his spear, the song of the flowers became louder than ever, and the beautiful woman appeared and sang to him. So enticing was her charm under the magician's spell that Amfortas, King of the Holy Grail, forgot all else, entered the garden, laid down his holy spear, and approached her whose singing had tempted him until he yielded.

Instantly the wicked man appeared, and grasping the spear he pierced Amfortas' side.

With a cry of agony Amfortas fell to the ground. The palace and the garden he now forgot and remembered only the Holy Grail.

The knights, hearing the cry, hurried back to the garden, and tenderly lifting their wounded king, carried him back to their home. Before they started they tried to find the spear, but the wicked magician had vanished with it. When they reached home with their king, they very carefully bound up his wounded side with a healing medicine which always before had cured the deepest wounds.

How Amfortas suffered day and night! The fever burned, and it seemed to him that his body was on fire. For weeks and weeks he lay in his bed hardly able to move, so great was the pain. All the medicine the kind knights gave him and all their tender nursing seemed to do him no good. The wound in his side remained the same as it was the day the spear pierced it.

Months went by. Often the knights

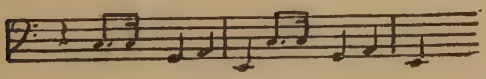
would carry their king down to the lake close at hand and bathe him in its cool waters, but even that did not ease his suffering.

Every day, as was their custom, the knights would enter the church and listen to the music.

GRAIL MOTIVE.

Sometimes they would carry Amfortas there, thinking that it might ease his terrible suffering, but it did not help him. They brought medicine from all parts of the earth, but it could not heal the wound.

One day the bell in the church rang out



BELL MOTIVE.

and in deep, solemn tones called the knights to enter the church. Slowly they approached, carrying, very tenderly, their king. As they entered the music began. Carefully laying Amfortas down they knelt and prayed that their king might very soon be well.

As they rose from their knees, Amfortas sat up and spoke to them again of the Holy Grail, telling them that if they always kept their lives pure and unselfish they would always have the Holy Grail with them. As he finished speaking he fell back exhausted, and the pain in his side seemed almost greater than ever.

For a moment there was silence. Then a faint voice was heard which seemed to come direct from Heaven. Slowly and softly it spoke:

"Wait for him whose life is filled with love and pity. He will go all around the

world and bring back the holy spear with which he will touch the side of Amfortas, and it will be healed."

What joy shone in the faces of the knights as they left the church, for the prophecy had been given of the end of the sufferings of Amfortas!

PARSIFAL.

II.

PARSIFAL.

II.

Happy indeed were the knights that the promise of the healing of Amfortas had been given, but they had to wait so long that at times they wondered if they could have mistaken the voice.

"No, that could not be," said the oldest among them, "for did not the voice come from above, and does that Divine Love ever fail?"

So, by the trusting faith of the old knight was the courage of all kept up. The days truly seemed very long, but faith and trust were in their hearts. Amfortas bore his suffering like the brave king that he was, and when the wound pained him most, he repeated to himself what the

voice had said,—"Wait for the one whose life is filled with love and pity."

One day the white-haired old knight was walking with his hands folded behind him, as if in deep meditation. His face, though thoughtful, was quiet and calm, for all the hard battles of life were over for him. To be sure, wrinkles could be seen on his brow, but they only told of the sacrifices which had been lovingly made. They were the handwriting on his face. Suddenly he stopped walking, and looking up to Heaven asked if the one who was to heal Amfortas would not soon come. Hardly had he finished speaking when a youth in forest dress, with a bow and arrow in his hand, bounded in front of him. The old knight was first to speak:

"My brave youth, who are you, and whence do you come?"

"I am Parsifal."

As he said it the Parsifal music was heard

PARSIFAL MOTIVE.

The youth continued to speak.

"I was very happy in the forest, living quietly with my mother. Very few people passed that way, but, alas, one day some gallant knights in full armour rode by. After that I was not contented. My heart burned like a living coal. Over and over again I told myself I ought to be a knight. At last I could contain myself no longer. I bade my dear mother good-by and started in search of knighthood."

"My young friend, do you know what

true knighthood means?" asked the old knight.

"Alas! I only know that the men I saw looked brave and true," replied the youth.

"To be a knight means even more than that. Years ago in my youth I also left home to become a knight, and it has taken me a whole lifetime to realize true knighthood."

"Everything is so peaceful here. To what place have I come?" asked the youth looking wonderingly about him.

"This is the domain of the Knights of the Holy Grail, and yonder stands the church on the very spot where we found the Grail."

While the old knight was speaking the bell began to peal, and the procession of knights, bearing Amfortas, could be seen entering the church with slow and solemn steps.

"Let us go into the church. There you will hear music like unto the songs of the angels," said the old knight.

"Shall I find the Holy Grail there within the church?" eagerly asked Parsifal.

"That no earthly knowledge can reveal,', replied his companion, and they entered the church together.

With folded hands Parsifal stood spell-bound just within the door. The old knight took his place among the others.

It would be hard to tell the feelings of the young Parsifal as he listened to the music. He had never before been in a church, and the music seemed indeed like an angel's song to him. As it ceased the knights knelt in prayer, after which they tenderly raised their king that he might speak to them. His strength was so nearly exhausted that he could scarcely speak, but Parsifal heard these words:

"Always be faithful to the Holy Grail."

Again the music burst forth and the procession of knights, moving slowly down the long aisle, left the church.

Parsifal stood, apparently transfixed, until the old knight approached and said softly to him "Come with me, and I will tell you all."

The youth whose life was just begun and the old knight who before many years would enter a new life, passed on slowly. Beside the calm waters of the lake they stopped and the knight told the whole sad story of Amfortas to the young Parsifal. He told him also of the voice which said "Wait for the one whose life is filled with love and pity."

"One must touch again the wound with the Holy Spear if our king lives," continued the knight, "and that is in the possession of the wicked magician. But I

must leave you now for I have duties to perform." So, bidding the youth good-by, he returned to the house.

Parsifal watched him until he disappeared. Then, with a heart filled with love and pity he turned in the direction of the magician's palace. His mind was filled with thoughts of the church and of Amfortas, King of the Grail. As he walked on, a great desire came to him to possess the Holy Grail, and now and then he stopped to see if he could not hear the voice telling him he had found it. But no voice spoke.

"I must press on so that I may recover the Holy Spear of Amfortas. That, and that alone, the old knight told me, could cure the wounded side."

The air seemed somewhat heavier as the youth hurried on, and it seemed more difficult for him to breathe than it did in the

knights' domain. But he did not stop. Although he knew it not, he was approaching the wicked magician's palace. So wicked was the magician that his power seemed to affect the very atmosphere.

Soon Parsifal stopped and listened, for he heard music.

"I must hasten on," thought he, "for that music comes from the garden of the magician's palace."

Louder grew the song as he neared the garden.

"Strange," said he to himself, "this music makes me think only of myself, while the Holy Grail music made me think of my Heavenly Father. It is so different."

Just then he came to the garden. Big, bright colored flowers were before him. Each flower was singing to him to enter, but he stood unmoved.

"Those flowers, though so highly colored, are poisonous, and they have none of the sweet perfume of my forest blossoms."

Louder and louder sang the flowers. In their midst stood a woman dressed in bright and glittering garments. Soon she too began to sing.

Parsifal listened, as in strains of wonderful music she coaxed him to come into the garden, where he could have everything that he wished to eat and drink and wear. Here he could listen to entrancing music all the day long, and have for companions the gay flowers.

"Come, only come," sang the woman.

Parsifal hesitatingly lingered and listened. So enticing was the song of the woman that it seemed to the youth as if the whole world were calling him. Suddenly he put his hand on his side as if in great pain.

"Now I know what Amfortas suffers," cried he. "No, I will not come into the garden. Is it not enough that you have caused Amfortas to suffer as he does?"

"Come, come, only come! We will make you forget all else," sang the woman.

"Never!" cried Parsifal.

Then the woman called aloud to the magician, for she knew her power was gone. As she screamed the magician appeared with Amfortas's Holy Spear. Looking for one moment at the youth he said angrily:

"I will wound you as I did Amfortas," and with that he threw the spear straight at Parsifal.

But strange as it may seem, instead of touching the youth, the spear hung poised in the air above his head. Surely some great love stayed it there. Filled with hope, Parsifal reached up and took the Holy Spear in his hand.

Just as he touched it a mighty crash came and the magician's palace and all its inmates, the gorgeous flowers and sparkling fountains, all disappeared. In its place stood wide-spreading shade trees.

Parsifal looked in amazement at the sudden change. Then he said, "I must hasten back to the knights, for now it will be but a few hours before Amfortas will be made well."

He looked in front of him; then turned and looked the other way, but alas, he knew not whether to turn to the right or to the left. He was lost!

Standing alone in the forest he prayed to the Heavenly Father that he might find the Holy Grail, and also that he might find his way back to the knights and to Amfortas. The thought of what the old knight told him came again to his mind,—"Some people have to travel all around

the world before they find the Holy Grail."

"Perhaps I may be one who has to travel far to find it, but I will press on, and when my life is pure enough and my heart filled with love, then I, too, may possess it."

Long and hard was the journey of the young Parsifal. For days and days he traveled without rest, and when at last he did lie down to sleep, in his dreams he traveled on, and even reached the end of his journey. But when he awoke he heard a voice say:

"Travel on. Love leads the way to the place where you will find the Holy Grail."

Often he would be obliged to go over rough and thorny paths. At other times high, jagged mountains loomed up before him, but hardest of all was the slimy, muddy slough which he had to wade through. His feet were bruised and sore

and many times his throat was parched and thirsty, but still he kept on, and never for a moment did he let go of the Holy Spear.

At times in his long journey he met people who needed his help. A poor, tired mother carrying a heavy baby would be going his way, and being young and strong he would take the baby in his arms and carry it for the mother; and at times an old man needed to be helped over a rough place.

One day as he was hurrying on he heard a faint moan, and looking down he saw a little white lamb that seemed to have lost its way. Very tenderly did he lift the little lamb in his arms and hold it close to his heart. It seemed as if in some way it gave new warmth to him, and again he thought of the sweet story his mother used to tell him of the dear Savior who carried

the lambs in his bosom. Parsifal's heart was very peaceful as he walked on. Soon he came to the shepherd and his herd of sheep, and placing the little lamb near its mother he passed on.

"You are coming nearer the Holy Grail," said the voice.

It was night time now, and as Parsifal walked on he looked up into the sky studded with twinkling stars. Far in the east the moon rose into the heavens and shed its beams on all the sleeping earth.

"How beautiful our world is!" thought Parsifal.

All that night he traveled. Presently the stars, one by one, disappeared, and as the earth awoke the moon gave place to the sun that it might do its work. Straight ahead of the youth was a forest. As he entered it his heart gave a glad leap, for it seemed to him as if he had been there

some time long before. With bowed head he walked on. Suddenly he stopped for he heard a voice say:

"Will not the one whose life is filled with love and pity soon come! The suffering of Amfortas increases day by day."

There through the trees Parsifal saw the old knight walking by the lake, and near him was the woman who had sung to him in the garden of the magician's palace. She looked very different now from what she did when she had tried to tempt him. Now her face was indeed beautiful, for a change had taken place within her heart. For years she had been under the spell of the magician, for in her youth she had done a wrong thing, and that was her punishment. The spell the magician held over her could not be broken until some one would be strong enough to resist all temptation. This Parsifal had done, so the

spell was broken when the palace disappeared, and the magician's power over her was gone. Now her life was given up to doing good that she, too, might find the Holy Grail.

With the spear in his hand, and a heart filled with love and pity, Parsifal approached them. The knight and the woman stood silent, for Parsifal's face shone like the sun, and in his hand they recognized the Holy Spear.

Parsifal spoke:

"I have traveled all around the world, and hard indeed has been the way, but love always whispered that at last I should find the church and Amfortas again."

And as he was speaking a great light shone above his head, and a voice, coming from the very center of the light, said:

"Here you have found the Holy Grail.

Ever after this you are to be King of the Grail," and to the woman the voice said, "You also have found the Holy Grail. Be true to it always."

The voice ceased, and Parsifal, placing the Holy Spear in the sand said, "Let us offer a prayer of thanksgiving."

Long they talked with the Heavenly Father, thanking him for all he had given to them, and asking him always to keep their lives pure and loving, that the Holy Grail might remain with them forever. As they rose, the dust-worn clothes of Parsifal fell to the ground, and he stood before them robed in pure white garments.

The bells in the church pealed forth in sweeter and more solemn tones than ever before, for it was Good Friday, the Friday before Easter. Once again the knights could be seen carrying Amfortas into the

church. Taking the spear in his hand Parsifal said:

"Let us also go into the church."

All was silent as they entered. Parsifal walked slowly to the suffering Amfortas, and gently uncovered the wounded side. Then, lifting the Holy Spear on high, he touched the wound.

Instantly the pain ceased, and for the first time since he had gone into the enchanted garden, Amfortas stood before them. Great indeed was their amazement, but greater still was their gratitude as they thanked the Father.

The great light shone again, and from the light came a pure white dove. It flew directly to Parsifal and alighted on his shoulder. Then all knew that he was King of the Holy Grail.

Again the music burst forth and told its story of the joy of unselfish love. It was

more beautiful than ever, for it not only told of the Holy Grail, but it told the story of Good Friday and of the glorious Easter day which followed, so that the whole earth would know that the Divine Love which made the Easter Tide, like the sun, shines on forever.

GRAIL MOTIVE.

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